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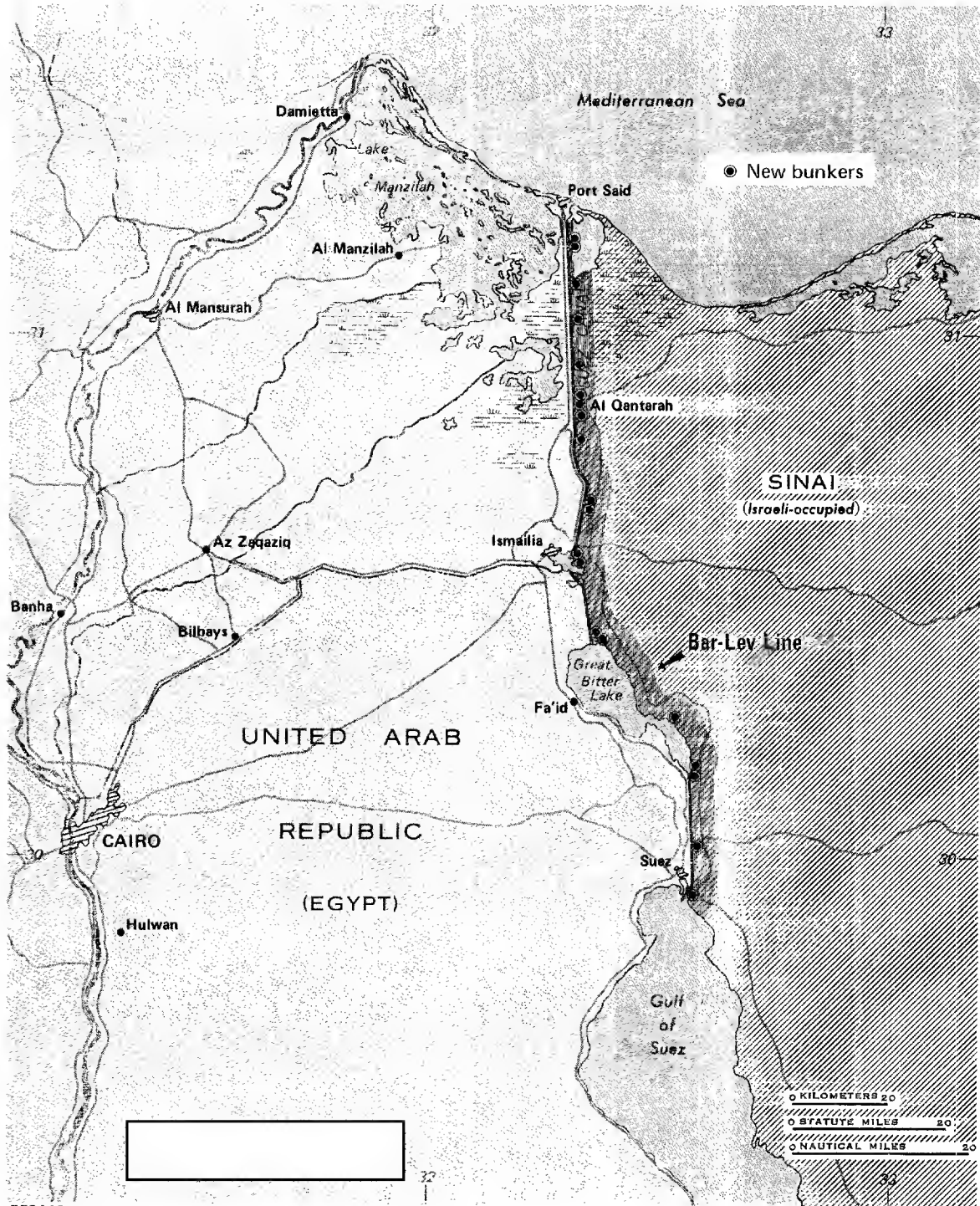
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Israelis Improving Positions Along Suez Canal



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ISRAEL: The Israelis have expanded and improved their defensive positions along the Suez Canal.

During the cease-fire period, they have constructed more than 20 new bunkers in their Bar-Lev Line--Israel's tripwire against an Egyptian invasion of Sinai. The new bunkers are H-shaped and are formed from large pipe sections. The command and living areas are covered with about 15 feet of rock, steel netting, concrete blocks, sandbags and earth.

The original positions were completed in the spring of 1969 and reportedly held up well during Egyptian artillery barrages. Few casualties have been reported among troops within the shelters. The new bunkers are larger and stronger than the original ones and will provide added protection for more personnel.

Egyptian spokesmen have protested Israeli construction work along the canal as a violation of the cease-fire agreement.

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